

# How Mediators Can Walk Their Talk Within the Mediation Community

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# Ewan Malcolm, Mediator & Trainer in New York, London & Scotland



Why is it that mediators' *behaviour* when they encounter conflict with their peers seems to be at odds with their *espoused beliefs* about handling differences?

# A few words about conflict with co-mediators

- Preparation, preparation, preparation
- Remember your training and that you are a model for the parties

**‘Particularly, when money and power are involved, the scene changes. You get competition, rivalry and organisational difficulties. I’ve seen that as a pattern in England and other European countries’**

**(Parkinson, 2010)**



## a '*discordant disparity*'

The apparent divergence between  
mediators' articulated ethos and  
their actions when managing conflict  
among themselves



'It was absolutely packed. It was standing room only. And full of people who were absolutely furious'.

They engaged in 'an amount of noisy hostility and quite aggressive questioning'

## The Extraordinary General Meeting

# Causes of conflict in this study

- ❖ Unequal treatment
- ❖ Threatened interests
- ❖ A flawed process





# Five theoretical approaches:

- ❖ Attribution theory
- ❖ Positioning theory
- ❖ Theory of competition and co-operation
- ❖ Sociology of professions
- ❖ Political systems

# Design a dialogue:

- ❖ Engage everyone who will come, in designing a path to dialogue
- ❖ Strive to creating a safe environment
- ❖ Find an acceptable facilitator
- ❖ Persevere with the consensus building process

# Create a constructive conversation:

- ❖ Practice unilateral collaboration
- ❖ Address self-image and status issues
- ❖ Encourage parity of esteem
- ❖ Reframe formal procedures.

**‘You need a mediation  
process for mediators too’**

**Parkinson (2010)**

# Conclusion

‘How we feel about our own disputes, contexts, experiences and situations should give us knowledge and remind us of the limits of what we promise, counsel and teach others’ (Menkel-Meadow, 1996-7:p1422)





# Ewan Malcolm

[www.ewanmalcolm.com](http://www.ewanmalcolm.com)

[ewanmalcolm@gmail.com](mailto:ewanmalcolm@gmail.com)